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THE INVESTIGATION OF A METHOD FOR THE DISSEMINATION OF
EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH FINDINGS TO PRACTITIONERS.

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THE RESOURCES AND ACTIVITIES OF A STUDY COUNCIL ON THE
PROBLEM OF MORE EFFECTIVE DISSEMINATION OF EDUCATIONAL
RESEARCH FINDINGS WERE REPORTED. THE CAPITAL AREA SCHOOL
DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION IN ALBANY, NEW YORK, SURVEYED SCHOOL
SYSTEMS TO DETERMINE THEIR MAJOR PROBLEMS AND INTERESTS FOR
STUDY AND RESEARCH. MEETINGS WERE HELD TO PLAN PROCEDURES FOR
INFORMATION DISSEMINATION. SOURCES OF RESEARCH, FACILITIES,
AND STAFF WERE SELECTED. THE PROGRAM PATTERN WAS THAT OF
ORGANIZING CONFERENCES, INSERVICE TRAINING, STUDY TEAMS, AND
CONSULTANT SERVICES. THIS REPORT WAS A CASE STUDY OF AN
EVOLVING PROJECT. EVALUATION WAS MADE BY STAFF OBSERVATIONS
OF CHANGE THROUGH A PROGRAM OF VISITS, INTERVIEWS, AND
QUESTIONNAIRES. THE DESCRIPTIONS OF THE OUTCOMES AND
CONCLUSIONS WERE REPORTED IN TWO SEGMENTS, ONE FOR EACH YEAR
OF PROJECT OPERATION. CAREFUL REVIEW OF THE RESULTS LED TO
THE INDICATION THAT DISSEMINATION CAN BE MADE AN EFFECTIVE
DEVICE FOR IMPROVING EDUCATION. A NUMBER OF RECOMMENDATIONS
WERE PRESENTED ON THE SUCCESSES, FAILURES, AND PROBLEMS OF
THE 2-YEAR PROJECT. (RS)

**THE INVESTIGATION OF A METHOD FOR
THE DISSEMINATION OF EDUCATIONAL
RESEARCH FINDINGS TO PRACTITIONERS**

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE
Office of Education

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FOREWORD

There has long been a concern among many educators about the degree to which education has lagged behind other facets of our national, societal enterprise in its development. In fact, in the post-Sputnik upheaval of criticism of schools, one heard repeated, more frequently than not, the same questions and charges that such educators had been raising for several years.

Attempts had been made to alleviate the problem and educational agencies and programs were developed to stimulate and speed change in education. Most such developments were based on the work of particular social scientists - Lewin, Lippett, Lalley and others.

Among the most successful of such instruments have been the school study councils, based on the findings and experimental development work of Dr. Paul Mort and his colleagues at Teachers College, Columbia University. In general, study councils have been developed as a cooperative enterprise between a university center and a group of schools for the purpose of effecting educational improvement.

Special Project "B", SAE8429, The Investigation of a Method for the Dissemination of Educational Research Findings to Practitioners, is a study of what occurs when an existing, actively successful study council focuses its resources and activities on the specific problem of more effective dissemination of research findings to the field. The project was undertaken with full understanding of public school personnel, university and council personnel, and United States Office of Education personnel, that it must necessarily be a kind of experimental evolvment of a new type of program based on critical insight, and frequently trial-and-error, rather than a precise, vigorous, quantitative

type study. Such flexibility, fortuitously built in, permitted an easy transition during the second year extension of the project, to a new emphasis on the study of patterns of organization for the effective dissemination of research information.

It would be difficult to classify this report as a research document. It is more a case history of a project which endeavored to incorporate appropriate knowledge from the social science and communications fields into the operation of an existing educational agency for the purpose of speeding the process of change.

What was learned from the project has been distilled into a section on recommendations for organization and procedures for effective dissemination. It is the conviction of the project staff that these fall sufficiently high on the scale of generalization to serve as a valuable guide to any who plan to "walk this way."

The project staff is deeply indebted to professionals in forty-five school districts for their support, to personnel from the New York State Education Department and the State University at Albany for their assistance, and to the staff of the Cooperative Research Program, United States Office of Education for their vision and forbearance as the project evolved.

Donald T. Donley

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I. THE CONTEXT

Within what context, from what combination of circumstances, did the ideas develop that crystallized the definition of a project designed to study methods for the dissemination of research findings to practitioners in education?

The educational ferment of the 1940's and early 1950's attracted relatively little attention outside of education and, in the broad sense, too little inside education. The increasing activity centered particularly around the large University Graduate Schools of Education and found their genesis in areas not traditionally consulted in education. There was an increasing awareness and excitement about studies and experiments in human relations, social and behavioral psychology, perception, action research, leadership, and other related fields. Educators began to look increasingly toward other areas of endeavor; agricultural service, medicine, industrial management, military service organizations etc., for new ideas and insights applicable to professional education. The work of Sherif, Cantril, Earle Kelly, Rogers¹ and his followers, and many others began to be studied with more intensity for suggestions or implications for more effective ways of organizing for improvement. Although education had been showing development, it enjoyed, societally speaking, a rather low priority and, consequently its pace was slower than that of other areas of endeavor. The resultant acceleration in the level of the demands and expectations placed on education, therefore, created a spreading impression of a relative deterioration. Recognition of this phenomenon as a critical problem at the national level was illustrated, for example, by the Kellogg Foundation grants for the study² of educational administration. However, there were many other developments which took place on a local or regional level and which also demonstrated the growing concern for speeding improvement in education. Among these, one of the most dynamic was the spread of the school study council move-

ment. The concept and structure of most study councils initially were drawn from the work of Paul Hirt and his colleagues at Teachers College, Columbia University and others previously cited. Each study council developed its own unique characteristics and programs but, in general, retained certain basic premises.

Most study councils, through the period 1940-1960 were cooperative endeavors including a cluster of school systems in a geographic area and a University which provided a central office and staff.

The basic premises for structure and operation were:

1. that there was a real necessity to speed change in education through greater emphasis on research, innovation, experimentation, demonstration, exchange of information, invention, and in-service training.
2. that such emphasis could not be attained by existing agencies and institutions already carrying assigned responsibilities and, therefore, a new type of agency should be created with this specific charge.
3. that the most desirable kind of agency in terms of effectiveness in enhancing change would be a cooperative one between the field practitioners who faced the problems and specialist research-oriented university personnel with mutual sharing of load and involvement.
4. that the newly created agency retain its regional nature since, even though it might be desirable to effect change on a state or national scope, modification of practice or program could be more readily achieved if the working relationships were close and immediate rather than impersonal and detached, professionally supportive and interested rather than inspectional and supervisory, and rooted in the concerns of an increasingly professional field team rather than imposed from outside.

Several descriptive studies of study councils have been made but for the benefit of readers interested in the movement the most comprehensive study is probably that done by John Gardner. In his assessment of Council vitality Gardner classifies among the most vital, The Capital Area School Development Association (CASDA).

CASDA was initiated in October 1949 at the State University of New York Albany (then the Albany College for Teachers). It was organized as a cooperative effort between the College Department of Education and several area school systems which subscribed fees for a service and study program under the direction of an executive secretary, a college faculty member.

Its major purposes, as described in the brochure Why CASDA³ were research, invention, dissemination and innovation.

The Constitution provided for an executive committee or board of nine chief school officers from cooperating school systems who were to be elected by all participating schools at an annual meeting. Committee members were elected to serve three year terms on a rotating basis during which they collaborated with the executive secretary in establishing policy and formulating program.

Throughout 1950-1959 the modus operandi which evolved for establishing program included an annual survey of cooperating schools to determine their interests and problems, a continuing analysis of individual requests from the schools for assistance or information, and collection of data relating to the thinking of educational leaders, academicians and others which appeared to relate to the evolving problems of education. The executive committee and central office staff distilled from all these sources an annual program which it anticipated would be of most benefit to most schools and yet supportable by

the resources available.

The program and organization developed well. The quantity and quality of activities improved, central staff increased to ten by 1960 - all of the professional staff having graduate teaching responsibilities, and the number of professionals served in the field increased steadily.

The following excerpt from an editorial in the October 1960 CASDA newsletter, CASDAIDS, which was distributed to over 6000 teachers in forty-five school districts, describes briefly the ten year period from 1950 to 1960.

If one is to judge from professional ferment and widespread developments in education, regional groups of leadership schools are to be congratulated for their vision. For example, the foresight and astuteness of CASDA schools, through the past decade, in supporting experimental activities and initiating cooperative endeavors toward effecting desirable local program innovations add up to professional leadership of a high order. Many of the CASDA school innovations are emerging in other areas and represent a "break through" to a higher level of professional operation.

In reviewing the past decade it is interesting to note that CASDA School Administrators, Board Members, and Staff Members initiated and/or supported such activities as:

1. A three year study of science education and the development of an elementary science teaching manual for kindergarten through grade six.
2. A three year study of language arts programs and the development of a sequential, developmental program in the language arts for kindergarten through grade twelve.

(Both projects antedated sputnik by a few years)

3. Annual series of workshops, seminars, and clinics for administrators (Administrative Seminars), school board members (School Board Clinics - now called School Board Institutes), Custodial Conferences, and teacher conferences.
4. Local school participation in study activities include modern mathematics programs for high school teachers, programs for the mentally retarded, effective evaluation and reporting, individualization of instruction, development of written school board policy, effecting behavioral change in the classroom, foreign language at the elementary level, education via television, programs for the gifted, creativity in teaching, and many more.

All of the foregoing efforts involved the bringing of outstanding specialists to Member Schools to stimulate thinking, share new ideas, and to guide study activities. Experts from national agencies, universities, the New York State Education Department and from fields other than education participated. Many of the studies resulted in handbooks, reports, and other published materials of pertinence and assistance to Member Schools and others in their efforts to improve educational practice.

However, one major problem persisted throughout the period, that of improving the effectiveness of dissemination. Readership surveys, interviews with selected personnel, annual evaluation, evaluation meetings, and activity evaluations all served to identify specific facets of the problem:

1. Established central office procedures did not insure that information reached the appropriate school personnel.
2. Information sent to schools frequently was not forwarded to the personnel most interested or concerned.
3. With the pressure of diverse responsibilities, collection of research and related information in the central office tended to be erratic.
4. Practitioners frequently lacked the knowledge or training to read research reports critically and with understanding.
5. Mental stereotypes held by many practitioners about "research" and "theory" inhibited reading interest in materials dealing with either.
6. Involvement of teachers in research or developmental activities tended to reflect more the tenor of the school administration and philosophy than it did exposure to information.
7. Those schools in which personnel had multiple contacts with research and development information generally demonstrated more interest and activity than those schools in which information was funneled through a single channel.

The persistence of communication failures, the less than adequate

dissemination, and the widespread nature of the problem as revealed in current literature caused the central staff of CASDA to put increasing emphasis on communications and resulted in a series of consultations with staff of the Cooperative Research Program, United States Office of Education, shortly after the passage of Public Law 531.

This then was the context within which and from which developed the proposal for Special Project "B", The Investigation of a Method for the Dissemination of Educational Research Findings to Practitioners.

II. THE DESIGN

Creating a design for a project which is intended to test the effectiveness of modifications in structure and procedures of an existing organization is a considerable challenge. When, in addition, the modifications consist of refocusing the purpose of many parts of the program without doing violence to the overall program the challenge became more complex. The data collected in continuous evaluation prior to the initiation of the project did not constitute an appropriate baseline for adequate quantitative measures of achievement inasmuch as the goals now were changed, nor yet was it possible to begin with a blank slate since the proposal was primarily concerned with the introduction of a new dimension in existing field relationships and procedures and a re-direction of purpose for many continuing activities. Consequently, the staff recognized early that any evaluation of the effectiveness of a design for improving dissemination would have to rely primarily on any readings which could be obtained indicating a marked increase of interest among school personnel in research information or activity. A marked increase in interest was defined to mean an increase among participating schools which was above the normal already established over a period of several years.

During the design planning phase, the project staff established two operating principles; first, that dissemination was essentially a communications function, and, second, that the act of dissemination, for project purposes, could not be assessed for effectiveness without a measure of response or reaction.

The staff also anticipated, on the basis of consistent earlier evaluative data, that real improvement in effectiveness of dissemination would involve at least:

1. reorganization of the central office structure and procedures for improving dissemination
2. reassignment of staff responsibilities and addition of specialized staff for research collection and processing
3. reorganization of staff and procedures within cooperating school systems toward developing better internal communications and dissemination
4. provision of training programs and experiences for practitioners to provide knowledge about research sufficient to enable them to read reports intelligently and critically, and to begin to develop assurance among them regarding the value of research and their capability to use it - with assistance as needed
5. provision of training experiences for school administrators in areas of research and development in order to increase their knowledge and to attempt to establish in a peer setting a higher priority for research and development programs
6. development of multiple contact, reinforcing types of dissemination relationships between the central office and cooperating schools and among the schools and other educational agencies.
7. provision, ultimately, of high professional-level training in research for those who demonstrated real interest and ability in designing and carrying on research in schools.

Drawing upon the foregoing, derived from several years of field service-study experience, and also extensively upon communications theory and studies, the CASDA staff and Executive Committee developed a proposal, the design for which incorporated the following elements; identification of sources of research pertinent to education, collection of research reports from these sources, processing of reports for fast retrieval and school use, dissemination of material

thus collected and processed to selected and trained personnel in cooperating schools for dissemination and utilization at the local level. The vehicle by which the elements of the design would become operational was the development and utilization of all possible dissemination media including personal contact, published materials, television, conferences and meetings of all types, training programs, advisement - briefly, any means which would serve to stimulate interest in research and provide for feedback and evaluation.

The proposal was accepted by the Cooperative Research Program as a special project and initiated on October 1, 1959. Probably the best concise description of the proposal and its implications for schools is that which was included in a CASDA newsletter and sent to all personnel in participating schools in November 1959, the month following the initiation of the project.

Effective October 1, 1959 the U.S. Office of Education has signed a research contract, under the provisions of Public Law 531, with the Capital Area School Development Association and the College of Education at Albany. The contract was granted to assist in the support of a research project developed by CASDA to investigate means for more effective dissemination of research findings to personnel in the CASDA member schools. Embodied in the project design are aspects of certain proposals developed by the CASDA Executive Committee during a conference on research held in May 1959. The Executive Committee proposed at that time that CASDA and Member Schools (1) place greater emphasis on the development and conduct of research, and (2) increase efforts to develop and support effective means to encourage adaptations of research to the local operation.

NEED FOR SPEED

Basically the research project proposes to investigate certain facets of the large scale problem of "lag" in the revision of school practices on the basis of research findings and accepted concepts. It is well accepted that the "lag" factor in education, as it is in many other fields, is inordinately long, thereby delaying much otherwise achievable and sorely needed desirable progress.

As a result among the major concerns of those interested in the improvement of education are the translation of research findings into comprehensible form for the use of practitioners and the transmission of these findings to practitioners. One vehicle for reducing this lag has been the school study council which, during the past fifteen years, has placed emphasis on the development and exchange of good practices among school systems and the stimulation of experi-

mentation at the local school level.

REVISION OF FOCUS

The CASDA project will investigate the hypothesis that the study council can fruitfully serve to reduce lag by turning part of its focus on the dissemination and application of new knowledge gained through basic research studies carried out by other educational and investigative agencies. This revision of focus complements the activities of Office of Education which, though it encourages and sponsors basic educational research through the Cooperative Research Program, relies on other agencies for dissemination and application of findings. In this project the U.S. Office is testing, jointly with the CASDA staff and Member Schools, the effectiveness of the school study council as an agency for the analysis and distribution of research findings to practitioners. Thus, the project complements the objectives of CASDA and its on-going attempts to encourage adaptations of research findings to local school programs and the development and conduct of research at the local school level.

QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED

Major questions to be investigated during the study are:

- . Will the dissemination of information regarding on-going and current research studies to a school study council result in the direct dissemination of such findings to practitioners?
- . Will a routinized process for the distribution of research materials to a study council stimulate research activities and/or change practices in the member schools of the council?
- . Will the activity noted above change the opinions of practitioners in regard to certain educational practices or alter their concept of the research process or the value of research?
- . What patterns of distribution of materials or research dissemination activities by a school study council appear to be most effective in influencing practitioners in member schools?
- . Will practitioners in the school systems involved become an important source for the identification of research needs?

CASDA FUNCTIONS

During the project the CASDA office will serve as a receiving center for the distribution of the following research data from the Cooperative Research Program:

- (1) An indexing and categorization system for research in various substantive areas in education.
- (2) An annotated bibliography of current and completed research in those fields.
- (3) Summaries of current research projects.

- (4) Summaries of completed research projects.
- (5) Syntheses and analyses of research in various areas.
- (6) Final reports on completed projects when available.

In addition to projects supported under Public Law 531 the reports and data received by the CASDA research center will be expanded to include projects being supported by other programs of the Federal government, private foundations, and other organizations. Data from the sources mentioned above are considered to be the raw material of current research in education.

CASDA will be responsible for converting this raw material into usable form for practitioners.

NEW MEDIA

In undertaking the conversion the CASDA staff and member schools will investigate such possibilities as newsletters, regional work conferences, annotated bibliographies, field trips by professional staff members, closed circuit TV, radio systems, consultant relationships, materials distributions, resource coordination and the like. In this regard the Office of Education will also provide lists of researchers who are working currently on major research projects or who have conducted significant research projects in a particular subject area so that the council may plan for direct contact between researchers and interested practitioners. These researchers will be available for consultant assistance in a variety of ways. With certain limitations, only the imaginativeness and interest of local study groups will determine the manner of operation and the effectiveness of these additional human resources.

BENEFITS TO SCHOOLS

Member schools will receive mailings of materials sent to the council. They will be directly involved in the development and operation of dissemination media utilized by the council in its normal activities and in the project program. Publications and other types of material will be channeled to teachers, administrators, and school board members on the basis of policies developed by the CASDA Executive Board and the membership.

The results of the project and evaluation of the effectiveness of dissemination media will be provided to member schools. In the process of evaluation an attempt will be made to assess the comparative value of varying methods of contact and types of research materials, although the primary purpose will be a general assessment of the effect of having the materials available for dissemination to teachers.

A highly desirable outcome of this project, in the light of the increasing interest in research evidenced by member schools, is the opportunity which will be provided for the identification and design of local research activities. It is our hope that the opportunity and encouragement given to local projects as a result of this project will result in the attraction of additional government and foundation resources

to assist in the support of research activities of CASDA Member Schools.

NEW STAFF

To facilitate the activities of the project the U.S. Office has provided for two additional members to the CASDA staff. Mr. Thomas Dolan, who has been carrying a programming responsibility with Television Channel WTEN and who is well known regionally for his earlier work with the Mohawk-Hudson Council on Educational Television, has joined the CASDA project as Research Associate. Mr. Dolan will be responsible for development of communication media and is available as a consultant to member schools in this capacity. He has a particular interest in the development of two-way radio and closed circuit TV as means for promoting in-service teacher training activities.

Mr. Bruce Viertel, formerly with the N.Y. State Education Department Library and currently a graduate student at the College, will be responsible for the categorization and library service connected with the project. Mr. Viertel will be available to assist administrators and teachers, individually or in groups, who may wish to visit the research center and utilize materials housed in the CASDA office.

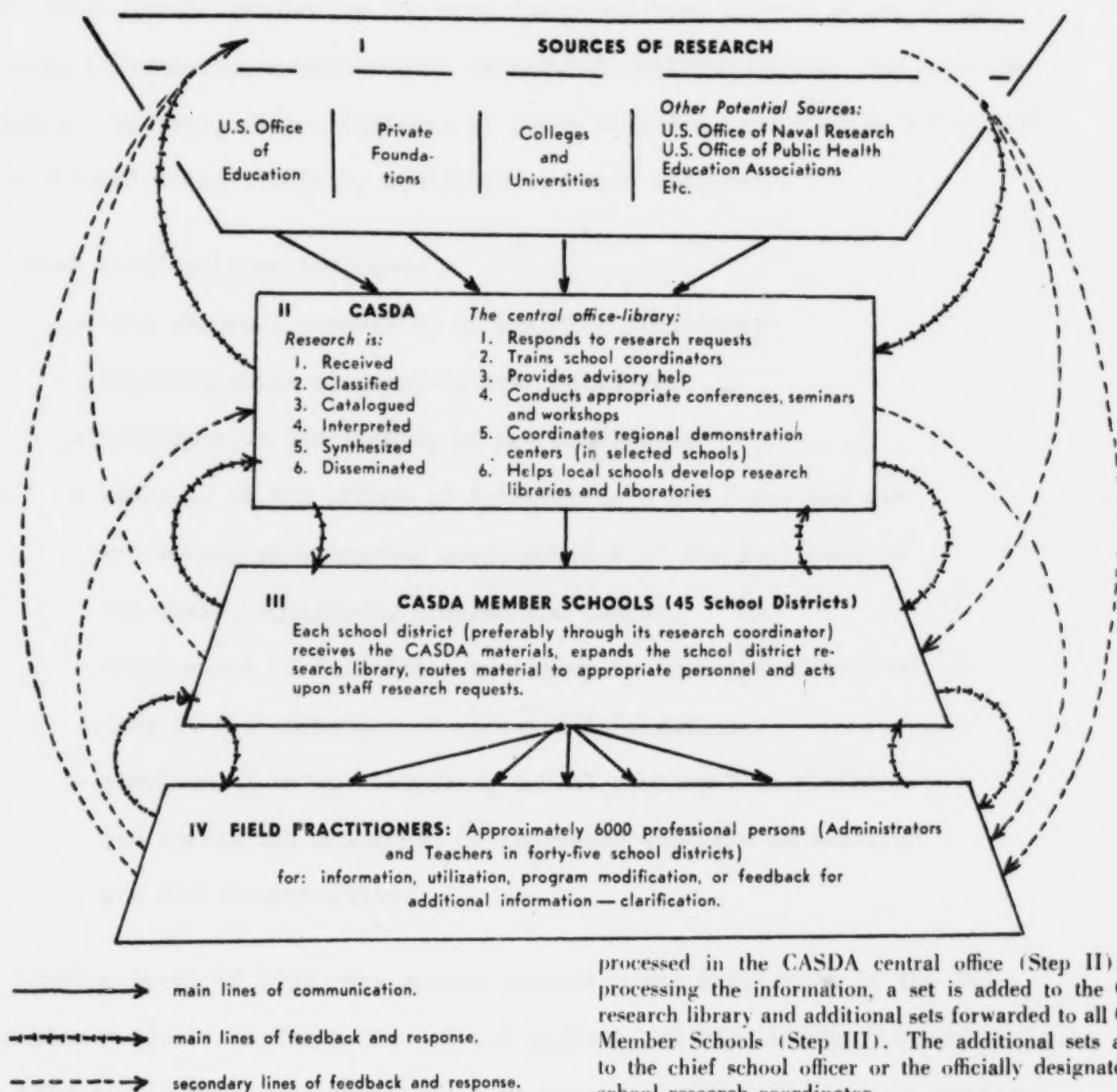
Initial distribution of materials and contacts with schools will be started within the next few weeks. In the meantime questions, suggestions, and indication of interest or desire to participate in the project will be welcomed by the members of the CASDA staff. Ideas, please!

While there was an established acceptance of the project on the part of Member Schools and early evidences of growing interest in it, the introduction of new concepts and activities into an established program inevitably induced questions. While the questions were diverse and emanated from persons of varying types of responsibility in several different school systems they, for the most part, were concerned with the relationship of the individual school, or administrator, or teacher to the total project. As a consequence, in 1960, a visualization of the model for the project with some explanatory text was published and distributed to all personnel in Member Schools.

It is included here in the interest of clarity.

CASDA—USOE Research Dissemination Project

MODEL



† IN ANSWER TO several inquiries from CASDA Member School personnel concerning effective ways of utilizing the research materials and information available through the dissemination project, this issue includes a visualization of the model for the project.

While all phases of the process have not yet been established, the visualization above indicates the full flow as it will function when research interpretation and synthesis is more adequately developed and when the regional school demonstration centers are fully operational. However, the model is functional to a high degree at the present time and appropriate conferences and workshops will continue to provide information and training for all school personnel in more effective utilization of the dissemination process.

As you can see from the model visualization, research study reports are collected from many sources (Step I) and

processed in the CASDA central office (Step II). After processing the information, a set is added to the CASDA research library and additional sets forwarded to all CASDA Member Schools (Step III). The additional sets are sent to the chief school officer or the officially designated local school research coordinator.

When received at the local level, materials should be added to the local school research library, easily available to all faculty, and notification sent to school personnel having responsibility or interest in the area of professional endeavor pertinent to the research information received (Step IV).

The feedback arrows in the model indicate possible ways in which the individual teacher, administrator, or coordinator can request additional information for clarification and better understanding—or can indicate a problem area in which research information would be helpful to provide better answers in interpreting practice or modifying educational practice at the local level.

Additional publication materials relating to research will be sent directly to all personnel to assist in the utilization of the process.

III. PROCEDURES

Inasmuch as one of the purposes of the program of the Capital Area School Development Association for many years had been dissemination of educational information, several tested procedural patterns already had been established. However, with a revision of focus toward a top priority being given to the dissemination function, modifications were necessary.

Such modifications included:

- more rigorous evaluation of existing procedures
- identification of possible new procedures
- introduction and testing of new procedures
- analysis of the effect of introducing a new focus and new procedures with special consideration of the implications for staff, equipment, program and budget.
- development of facilities necessary to increase effectiveness in dissemination of research information.
- involvement of participating school personnel in planning and initiating a program of increased emphasis on research and its dissemination.

During April of 1959, the spring preceding the initiation of the dissemination project, all forty-five school systems had been surveyed to determine what they considered to be their major problems and interests for cooperative study and research during the school year 1959-60. In addition each building principal in all systems was asked to indicate his staff's reaction to a number of suggestions for professional cooperative action which were distilled from central staff concerns, current professional literature, and expressed interests

of university personnel in various specialized fields. While such a survey was an annual affair, the results being used to plan program for the succeeding school year, the 1959 survey (in anticipation of the dissemination project) placed considerably greater emphasis on research than had previously been the case. Also each survey questionnaire requested a frank field assessment of communications procedures, conferences, publications, study group operation, and university-field relationships in general.

Using the data gathered from the returns, a series of meetings was conducted involving CASDA staff and the nine chief school officers elected by all forty-five participating schools to serve as an executive committee. The purpose of the meetings was to plan ways and means of implementing more effective dissemination of research information.

The dissemination model shown earlier in this report represents one of the results of these meetings.

Certain specific procedures were inaugurated as rapidly as possible to make the model operational.

Sources of Research

Beginning in the summer of 1959 several selected possible sources of research information were canvassed to begin supplying research study reports and information. These included federal offices, colleges and universities, some foundations, and professional associations, but the major source was to be the cooperative research program of the U.S. Office of Education.

Facilities

In the CASDA office at the State University of New York at Albany a central office-library was established to serve as a research repository and

as a work and consultation center for field practitioners from participating schools.

Staff

Two research associates and one full time secretary were added to the staff to assume responsibility for the specialized tasks relative to improved dissemination. Such tasks were identified as:

1. Establishment of a research library, classification and cataloging systems, and information retrieval procedures.
2. Evaluation and utilization, on an experimental basis, of the various media including educational TV and FM radio.
3. Providing for an anticipated increase in the volume of typed and duplicated material and correspondence.

Program

The program pattern for cooperating schools, as indicated previously, was that of organizing conferences, in service training, study teams, and consultant service for a given school year on the basis of a survey of school interests and problems conducted the preceding spring. The basic format continued during the dissemination project with the additional commitment on the part of the central staff and the schools that research implications in each of the program areas would be more heavily emphasized. Also, it was planned to disseminate research and innovation information to all professionals involved, on a whole-sale basis, while providing training programs for selected personnel in the skills of reading studies critically, evaluating research, and applying to practice where possible. For those who demonstrated particular interest, training was to be provided in designing and conducting research studies.

Chronology of Development and Procedures'

October 1, 1959 to December 31, 1959

A research repository and library-work center were established in the CASDA offices at the University. Additional staff were employed.

An indexing and categorization system for classifying and handling research reports was developed. Extensive study of available Taxonomies and specialized libraries in universities, professional schools, and industry proved of little assistance in organizing the repository materials. Therefore CASDA developed its own. Full sets of research reports were distributed to each participating school system with the recommendation that a central file or office be established under the direction of a specified individual for use by the system. An instruction manual for use of the materials was developed and sent to all systems. Approximately two hundred research study reports were collected and processed during this period.

All CASDA administrators were invited to participate in a three day convocation of the Educational Research Association of New York State held in Albany in November.

A special general meeting for all participating school superintendents and board members was held and a full description of the project, its operation and resources was presented. The proposal for local support was unanimously endorsed.

A bimonthly research newsletter was initiated in November and printed in sufficient quantity to provide every staff member in all participating schools with an individual copy. The newsletter, CASDAIDS, was a four page, colorful publication with conscious stress on straight-

forward, crisp reporting of information. Contents included continuous reporting on the dissemination project, brief abstracts of current research studies, reports on experimental programs and innovations in participating schools and others, current reports on CASDA activities and calendars, and brief news items on new developments related to education.

An early morning television program "Education in Review" was launched on a local commercial channel. Content was similar to that included in the newsletter but was oriented toward the school community.

The possibility of using area wide FM radio in conjunction with a local medical school was investigated and dropped because the cost was prohibitive for the limited project budget.

Reports on the project were presented at all regional and statewide professional conferences during the period.

January 1, 1960 to March 31, 1960

The research repository was expanded and classification system refined.

Additional help was sought to assist in abstracting research reports and interpreting them for field practitioners.

A schedule was set up for project staff to visit participating schools and to meet with groups of faculty and administrators to describe the project and to explore with them methods of using research materials and resource persons.

Evaluation instruments and techniques were studied and a system for

collecting and classifying project-inspired research requests was developed.

A series of central research conferences was initiated for the purpose of bringing administrators and teachers into contact with those doing research or developmental work in specialized fields, to expose practitioners to the realities of research, and to provide the opportunity for better understanding. The conferences focussed on school-community relations, team teaching, curriculum problems, language arts, business management, elementary science, education for the gifted, administration, principalship and research, first year teaching experience, conservation education, and education for the mentally retarded. In each conference considerable attention was directed toward research and development in the specific area and appropriate personnel from all participating schools were invited. Attendance was good.

A survey of local school research interest was conducted and the areas of greatest interest identified for the purpose of programming subsequent meetings and study groups.

April 1, 1960 to June 30, 1960

The research library files were expanded and additional materials distributed to schools.

A research reference library was formally established in the CASDA library-work center for the use of staff and visiting school personnel working on individual or school problems.

Increasing numbers of requests were received for assistance to schools in designing research studies of local problems.

Special central conferences were held in Albany to train interested school personnel in basic research and fundamental statistics.

Workshops were conducted in three area school districts which provided research information and personnel for the use of local school people in analyzing local programs.

As a result of the continuing conference program and articles in the Newsletter, requests for research information in specialized areas, assistance in local research efforts, and use of the research library facilities showed a steady increase during this period.

An old service was revived at the request of participating schools. A tape library of the talks given by the various consultants in the dissemination project was established and circulated to schools on request.

A new service was established, also at the request of cooperating school systems. Bibliographies of selected materials dealing with specific problem areas were compiled and distributed to all school systems, with additional copies available upon request. The first two bibliographies dealt with Homework and Guided Study and the Mentally Retarded and Slow Learner.

The study group of elementary teachers, supervisors and administrators who had been working in the area of elementary science completed their report which was published in book form entitled, Experiences in Elementary Science.

Several other publications, resulting from the work of study groups and from school requests, were released. These included:

1. Language Arts - A Sequential Program, K-12
- a teachers' manual based on practice and language study.
2. Learning for Adjustment and Objectives in Content Areas for the Educable Mentally Retarded
- a two book series on curriculum for the mentally retarded.
3. Salaries and Salary Policies - CASDA Schools
4. Survey of Practices in Educating the Gifted, CASDA Schools

July 1, 1960 to September 30, 1960

The expansion of the research repository and research reference library continued and additional materials were sent to all schools.

New bibliographies were compiled; Communications, Foreign Language in the Elementary School, and Business Education in the Junior High School.

Visits were made by project staff to cooperating schools for the purposes of evaluating the first year of the project in individual interviews with administrators, exploring possible ways of making project materials more applicable to local program development efforts, and refining dissemination procedures.

The contract with the Cooperative Research Program of the U.S. Office of Education was renegotiated for an additional year and amended to place greater emphasis on the study of organization for more effective dissemination.

The program for the school year 1960-61 was established in a series of meetings of the project staff and the executive committee of superintendents based on a review of the first year of the project and the evaluation interviews with chief school officers. The evaluation forms completed by participants at the close of all meetings and workshops provided sharp guidelines for program delineation.

With the extension of the contract for the dissemination project for the additional year to September 30, 1961 certain new techniques and foci were planned, and these will be described in the next four sections along with descriptions of continuing current activities. Throughout the following year the expansion of the research repository, the research reference library, the tape library and the identification of new research information sources was a continuous process. Therefore, these will not be mentioned again as part of the chronological development reporting.

October 1, 1960 to December 31, 1960

Seminars, conferences, and meetings for particular interested school groups were continued. The meeting activities included administrative seminars for chief school officers, school board institutes for administrators and board members, building principal research clinics, curriculum research meetings, school business managers meetings, and other specialized meetings which were programmed to place emphasis on new practices and new research studies available through the dissemination project.

During this period the results of evaluation interviews and questionnaires were analyzed to identify sharply the operational inadequacies in dissemination procedures during the first year of the project. As a result of this analysis the concept of organizational revision to establish better local dissemination through regional centers emerged, and a series of meetings of the executive board was scheduled to plan the establishment of such centers.

The number of requests for materials and assistance from teachers in

the field continued to increase, and on the basis of what had been learned about communication break-downs within school systems, a communication specialist was employed to work with school administrators on the problem of internal communications in order to make research dissemination more effective within their districts.

To assist in improving the utilization of the project a visual model was published in the newsletter which was distributed to all personnel in all cooperating schools so that there would be comprehensive dissemination of the design, the resources, the activities, the communication channels, and the role of the different professional groups involved in the project.

Because of concerns about the increasing costs of such specialized activities as research, experimentation, and innovation, an outstanding economist was employed to meet with school board members and administrators in order to study the current situation and probable future development of educational costs, government aid and other bases for support of educational programs.

January 1, 1961 to March 31, 1961

The program of weekly meetings and conferences was continued. A more extensive schedule for field visits of project staff to school systems was established. The purpose of these visits was to assist individual schools and their faculty members with specific research projects, a number of which had been generated by school involvement in the dissemination project.

A cooperative endeavor between CASDA and the Elementary and Secondary Principals Associations of New York State was inaugurated to

inform school building principals of the dissemination project. The endeavor involved a series of meetings on research for principals of the entire region including all school systems not participating in the project as well as those that were. The intent was to establish an area wide climate of knowledge and understanding of the project.

Two new publication series were begun during this period. The first was essentially a special service communication device designed to furnish information to appropriate school personnel on an immediate basis. Designated "CASDA Grams" the device was a one or two page mimeographed release with a distinctive heading which served as a "quickie" report on short notice meetings, current developments, or newly available research reports or studies of interest to particular persons or groups in participating schools. CASDA Grams were sent directly to those having a special interest in the contents, with information copies being sent to administrators. Because CASDA Grams could be produced and sent directly on a weekly basis or oftener, they helped eliminate both the publication lag which is inevitable with printed materials and also the bottleneck to dissemination which occurs when materials are sent to a central office and processed through channels.

The second publication was a pocket size booklet called "Seminar" which reproduced for school use the speeches delivered by consultants at administrative seminars which were held three or four times a year during the project.

April 1, 1961 to June 30, 1961

A regular schedule was established for project staff to visit schools in the field for cooperative analysis of problems and study

of pertinent research, assessment of the degree to which project research materials were being used at the local school level, identification of activities in schools which had been stimulated by the project, and solicitation of suggestions for improving the effectiveness of dissemination procedures.

As one phase of CASDA's standing policy of cooperation with the New York State Education Department, a conference on health education was held involving representation from the American Medical Association, CASDA Schools, and the Education Department. The purpose of the conference was to explore current practice in health and physical education programs and to initiate studies of programs and problems in these areas on a continuing basis. Arrangements were also made to begin collecting and disseminating to schools information on medical knowledge and research of significance to educators.

A new service was introduced in response to requests from cooperating schools for information on specific problems. Research materials and other information bearing on specific topics or problems were collected and organized in kits. Each kit, a zippered case, was catalogued and filed in a research kit library in the central office and schools were notified that they were available on a circulating basis. As requests were received for information dealing with other problems additional kits were prepared. When a specific problem was common and the demand was heavy, duplicate kits were prepared.

CASDA participated, at the request of the New York State Education Department, in developing a design for the "Commissioner's 1961 Inventory of Educational Change in New York State."

Discussions were continued on the establishment of regional research dissemination offices. Four school systems; one rural, one suburban, one rural centralized, and one urban volunteered to serve as pilot centers servicing adjacent school districts by distributing research and related materials directly to school personnel and by assisting them in research and experimental efforts. Each of the four pilot schools agreed to provide space and also one staff member on a released time basis for training and later for supervising the regional center under the guidance of the university center.

A week long conference on Machine Teaching and Programmed Learning was conducted at one of the participating schools.

July 1, 1961 to September 30, 1961

Consultation and evaluation processes were carried on and central staff members began collecting and organizing data relative to the study of the effectiveness of the dissemination project and the initiation of field research studies resulting from the project.

Additional publications were developed and released to all participating schools:

1. Care and Study of Animals, an annotated bibliography
2. Paleontology, an annotated bibliography
3. Salaries and Salary Policies, CASDA Schools 1960-61
4. The School Business Official in New York State, a status study
5. Maintaining a Good Learning Environment Through Proper Custodial Service, a conference report.

The CASDA Program

While the preceding chronology describes in a step-by-step fashion

the evolution of the dissemination project and procedures it does not reveal clearly the nature of the ongoing program around which and within which the focus on research and dissemination was applied.

Therefore, excerpts from the annual reports for the school years 1959-60 and 1960-61 are included here. Traditionally the annual report was a digest of the year's activities which was sent in multiple copies to administrators and school board members of supporting schools. Reports were compiled at the close of the school year and supplied to schools as a source of information and review, and as a basis for reaction to program proposals for the following year. The annual reports for the two years of the project maintained their traditional function but introduced two innovations; first, the rather obvious emphasis on research and dissemination in all facets of the program, and, second, an accompanying file including copies of all transmitted materials regarding all activities of the year's program. Although somewhat bulky the file provided detailed information to schools and school boards and made visible the scope of the program.

The majority of the meetings mentioned were held during school time with school personnel attending on a released basis with no loss of pay. The justification was, of course, the professional nature of the activity. Interestingly, the ongoing study groups began to meet nights and weekends as they neared a termination point in their work.

Annual Report 1959-60

I. Conferences, Projects and Studies

- A. Administrative Seminars - central meetings planned to bring to chief school officials new knowledge of research and other information relative to educational practices and emerging problems.

(3 meetings, total attendance 213 persons from 46 schools)

Programs and Program Leaders:

1. Communications - studies of school-community relations
in California

Dr. William O'Dell

Dr. Richard Carter

2. Team Teaching - report on the experience of the Harvard team
3. Assessing the Future - discussion of position papers
presented by leaders in education, government, and
mass media

Mr. Harold Lavine

Senator Earl Brydges

Dr. Willard Goslin

- B. Curriculum Research Surveys - meetings designed to point out and
emphasize the relationship of curriculum development to research
findings and, to identify local problems needing research attention.

Programs and Program Leaders:

1. Survey of Practices in Educating the Gifted
2. Survey of Selected Instructional Expenditures
3. Curriculum and Research Problems Sensitivity Survey
4. Curriculum and Research Problems Workshops. (2 meetings,
total attendance 119 persons from 37 schools)

4a. Research and Program

Dr. Susan S. Smith

4b. Research Design Development

Dr. John Rosenbach

- C. Elementary Principals Research Clinics - meetings designed to bring
new concepts, methods, and research information to practitioners of

elementary administration and supervision.

Programs and Program Leaders:

1. Team Teaching

Dr. Wade Robinson

Mr. Ellis Hagstrom

2. Research and Research Design Development

Dr. John Rosenbach

Dr. Alice Scates

3. Cooperative Program with Administrative Seminar

Dr. Willard Goslin

Mr. Harold Lavine

Senator Earl Brydges

(3 meetings, total attendance 195 persons from 55 schools)

D. Seminar on Slow Learner and the Mentally Retarded - local and regional meetings established to disseminate research information on programs for the slow learner and mentally retarded.

Programs and Program Leaders:

1. Seminar Group

Dr. William R. Carriker

Mr. Charles S. McAllister

Mr. Bernard Shawn

(1 local meeting, total attendance 58 persons from 27 schools;

4 regional meetings: total high school faculty, Berlin Central School; total high school faculty, East Greenbush Central School; total junior high school faculty, East Greenbush Central School; total faculty of all public and parochial schools, city of Rensselaer, New York)

E. Conference for First Year Teachers - focused on some of the

observations, satisfactions, and dilemmas of the first year of teaching.

Program and Program Leader:

1. "A Kit of Tools"

Dr. Willard Goslin

(1 meeting, total attendance 80 persons from 25 schools)

F. Conferences for School Business Officials - designed to meet the needs of school administrative personnel having responsibility for management of funds and facilities.

Program and Program Leaders:

1. Leo Casey
2. Fred Dela Fleur
3. William Firman
4. J. A. Holbitter
5. John Johu
6. Charles Quinn
7. Dexter Tilroe
8. Blanche Waterman
9. Harold Masterbarth

(10 meetings, total attendance 350 persons from 50 schools)

G. Capital Area School Board Institute - studied problems of common interest to school board members.

Programs and Program Leaders:

1. The Challenge of Russian Education and the School Board

Mr. Nicholas DeWitt

2. Public Opinion and the School Board

Dr. Neal Gross

3. The Democratic Process and the School Board

Mrs. Edith Simmons

(3 meetings, total attendance 410 persons from 43 schools)

H. CASDA Custodial Conference - designed to provide inservice experience for school custodians and superintendents of buildings and grounds.

Program and Program Leader:

1. A Decade of Progress and A Look Ahead

Mr. John Gorman

Mr. Malcolm Cortis

(1 meeting, total attendance 150 persons from 34 schools)

II. CASDA-USOE Dissemination Project

Much of the effort of the past year has been devoted to the development and evaluation of better research dissemination procedures under a project contract between CASDA and the Cooperative Research Program of the U.S. Office of Education.

In addition to the heavy emphasis on research and training in research as evidenced in the annual program described above, the CASDA schedule for the year was expanded to include several new developments.

- A. Establishment of a research repository, classification, distribution and information retrieval system.
- B. Establishment of a research library-work center.
- C. Attendance at twenty-three meetings of member school and professional association groups to explain the dissemination project.
- D. Processing continual requests for information about the project

of research from member schools, other schools, states, universities and cities. Twenty-four of the requests for specific research information necessitated consultation.

E. Devotion of 75% of newsletter space to research information.

F. Extensive schedule of field visits and interviews.

Annual Report 1960-61

I. Conferences, Forums and Studies

A. Administrative Seminars - central meetings planned to bring to chief school officials new knowledge of research and other information relative to educational practices and emerging problems.

(4 meetings, total attendance 380 persons from 47 schools)

Programs and Program Leaders:

1. Current Research Problems and Information
2. Current Status of Health Education
3. Machine Teaching and Programmed Learning

Dr. Fred Hein

Dr. Lloyd Trump

B. Curriculum Research Surveys - meetings designed to point out and emphasize the relationship of curriculum development to research findings and, to identify local problems needing research attention.

Programs and Program Leaders:

1. Workshop on Library-Resource Utilization
2. Care of Animals in the Classroom
3. Paleontology - Fossil Life of New York
4. Programmed Learning
5. Conservation Education

C. Elementary Principals Research Clinics - concerned with current

programs for the gifted child, elementary certification, elementary research techniques, the ungraded elementary school, machine teaching and programmed learning. (3 meetings, total attendance 400 persons from 47 schools)

- D. Seminar on Administrative Research - designed to study and analyze processes of innovation and methods of administrative evaluation.

Programs and Program Leaders:

1. Study of Administrative Evaluation
2. Commissioner's Study of Innovation

Dr. Henry H. Brickell

- E. Study Groups - established to investigate the implementation of mathematics and conservation programs in member schools.

Programs and Program Leaders:

1. Integration of Math and Science in Junior and Senior High Schools
2. The Development of Nature Trail Programs

- F. Conference for School Business Officials - designed to meet the needs of school administrative personnel having responsibility for management of funds and facilities.

Programs and Program Leaders:

1. Continuing programs to survey current best practices and new information in related areas of law, certification, public relations, transportation, auditing, inservice training, insurance, coding and classification.
(10 meetings, total attendance 400 persons from 50 schools)

- G. Capital Area School Board Institute - studied problems of common interest to school board members.

Program and Program Leaders:

1. School Boards Go To School
2. Modern Buildings and Classrooms for Modern Times
3. Financing American Education in the Years Ahead
4. Developing a Quality Education Program

Dr. Walter Heller

Dr. Lorne Woollett

H. CASDA Custodial Conference - designed to provide inservice experience for school custodians and superintendents of buildings and grounds.

Program and Program Leaders:

1. Maintaining a Good Learning Environment

Dr. Ridgely Sugg

Mr. Gray Taylor

(3 meetings, total attendance 183 persons from 39 schools)

II. CASDA-CRUE Dissemination Project

In mid October, 1960, CASDA negotiated with the United States Office of Education for a one year's extension and increase of a research grant for the Dissemination Project under the Cooperative Research Program of the U.S. Office. To a large extent, consequently, the CASDA program for 1960-61 was shaped along lines approved by the Executive Committee and total membership a year previously.

The implications for programs were then:

1. Increasing emphasis on expanding CASDA's research repository and research resources for schools.
2. Increasing emphasis on disseminating research information to CASDA member schools.

3. Increasing the staff personal visits to individual school systems for research design and consultation work.
4. Decreasing the number of large central meetings with the attendant pressures on member school personnel in terms of released time and costs for supply or substitute teachers.
5. Decreasing emphasis on the continuing action research type study project involving school staffs as individual schools began developing their individual projects.

The formal contract terminates September 30, 1961 and while the final analysis and report will not be completed until later, current evaluation indicates that CASDA has developed extensive resources for use of CASDA schools (as indicated elsewhere in this report) and that the individual approach, while helpful to single school systems, poses a problem in terms of organization viability and increases communication problems, as well as creating the dilemma of attempting to serve experiences for continuing and established program while developing new program discussions.

As can be seen upon reading the annual report increasing emphasis upon research and its dissemination was demonstrated in all conferences, seminars and study groups. Other developments were also accomplished.

1. Library of research reports and research references was greatly expanded.
2. New cooperative relationships with the Educational Research Association of New York State, Council for Administrative Leadership, State Education Department, and other professional groups and agencies were established for the purpose of research information exchange, development and cooperation.

- C. Central CASDA staff members logged a total of almost 200 meetings with individuals and groups in participating schools for discussion of and consultation on research and research projects. The visits included one or more trips to all but thirteen of the forty-five school systems involved.
- D. Requests for information and utilization of the research library facilities averaged about five per week throughout the year. This represents better than a 100% increase over the average of the spring semester of 1959-60.
- E. Requests for field service not directly related to the project reached an all time high during the past year. A total of forty-six of the faculty at State University contributed their knowledge and skill to filling these requests from CASDA schools and their communities.

IV. OUTCOMES AND CONCLUSIONS

As was stated in the foreword, this report, because of the nature of the project, is more a case study of an evolving project than it is a tightly statistical, quantitative assessment of the impact of an innovative practice.

Evaluation depended on CASDA staff observations of change in central meetings and on field visits and also on obtaining continuous reactions from school personnel of their perceptions of project activities. Such perceptions were collected through a continuous program of visits, interviews, and questionnaires.

Even the possibility of using non-participating schools as a control group for comparative study was negated early in the project for two basic reasons. The schools who participated constituted a unique sample or population because of several year's history of cooperative, developmental relationships with CASDA. Also, there was a constant problem of spillover of information and program innovation into non-participating schools which were adjacent to or had otherwise close contacts with participating schools.

However, it was possible to establish differences among participating schools related to the investment of time and staff they made in the project and to such other factors as staff characteristics, school community relations, and administration. These will be discussed later.

Because the contract for the second year of the project was modified as a result of the evaluation of the first year's experience the description of outcomes and conclusions will be presented in two segments, one for each year.

Communication Project, 1959-60

The project proposal was originally entitled, The Investigation of a

Method for the Dissemination of Educational Research Findings to Practitioners.

The procedures described in the previous section were instituted in an effort to make operational what was deemed to be a logical model for improving dissemination. The evaluation of the procedures was designed to test their effectiveness by collecting data to answer five fundamental questions. These and CASDA's findings are presented below. The responses represent a synthesis of findings derived from evaluation and observation and reaction review by CASDA staff and the Executive Committee of Chief School Officers. Questions to be answered:

1. Will the dissemination of information regarding on-going and current research studies to a school study council result in the direct dissemination of such findings to practitioners?

Response: Once the machinery was established for the collection, processing and distribution of research materials by a central agency the mechanical process for placing it in a central location in individual school systems or buildings proved physically simple. The degree of usability of the material for practitioner use depended on the scope of materials available to the central agency and the pertinence of the materials to educational practice. It also depended on the quality of processing the central agency could provide in classifying, abstracting, and synthesizing information for practitioner use in applying it to specific problems or program modification.

The extent to which specific material was disseminated to appropriate individual practitioners after receipt by the school system repository was directly related to the distribution system established by the school and the amount of staff time provided to make the system work... to one to it that materials of particular interest to individual teachers,

supervisors or administrators were called to their attention and made easily available to them.

Because of variation in the manpower available for training and operating in this role among school systems, it was found necessary at the close of the first year of the project to invent different techniques for reinforcing dissemination at the local level.

Those schools in which dissemination was most effective tended to be those in which administrators and board members considered innovation and research important and demonstrated it by providing visible space for a research repository, releasing staff for study and dissemination efforts, and encouraging in-service training and experimentation. Differences in types of communities, school-community relationships, staff load, and available facilities exerted some influence on the effectiveness of dissemination but the single most important factor appeared to be the attitude of the chief school officer, his immediate staff, and building principals.

Size of school system did not appear to be a determining factor in degree of effectiveness of dissemination. Use of internal resources did.

2. Will a routinized process for the distribution of research materials to a study council stimulate research activities and/or change practices in the member schools of the council?

Response: The process itself did not make a difference. The use of the fruits of the process did. The more routinized the process became the more material and time was available for staff to follow up on field studies and requests for information or service. Generally speaking, the greater the opportunity for contact, cooperative relationships, and faculty involvement in planning and development of new programs, the

stronger were the indications of vitality and development in the schools.

3. Will the activities noted above change the opinions of practitioners in regard to certain educational practices or alter their concept of the research process or the value of research?

Response: Although there were marked indications of increasing interest and support among school personnel throughout the spring semester of 1959-60 it would not be possible to say that there was a modification of opinions and concepts toward the process and value of research. It was the hope of the project staff and executive committee that the training and exposure of school personnel in research during the last half of the school year would result in such modification if the program could be continued. The constant increase of inquiry by member school personnel into research during the period was encouraging.

4. What patterns of distribution of materials or research dissemination activities by a school study council appear to be most effective in influencing practitioners in member schools?

Response: In general two patterns of dissemination and distribution proved more effective than others in influencing practice.

While it was believed that the mailing of printed material, television programs and such methods provided at least exposure to and reinforcement of more active types of research pursuits it was not possible to estimate the impact during the half year that the project began to be operational.

However, those patterns of dissemination which did prove fruitful were:

4. Dissemination activities which provided personal contact, either directly between the project staff and practitioners, or indirectly

through the offices of the school system administrators and supervisors.

- B. Dissemination activities carried on in those school systems which made a commitment to the project to the extent of providing staff, time and space for good internal communication and follow up on the disseminated materials. Such schools were marked by active faculty committees and frequent individual requests of the project's central office.

5. Will practitioners in the school systems involved become an important source for the identification of research needs?

Response: As a result of several years' experience in cooperative development work the CASDA staff and executive committee knew that the yearly surveys of problems and interest among participating schools tended to anticipate educational trends by two to five years. However, it was not considered to be certain that the same phenomenon would occur in the area of specific research needs. At the close of the school year 1959-60, on the basis of requests for research information and consultations on research design and projects the tentative conclusion was reached that with continuation of the project practitioners probably would become an increasingly important source for such identification.

Dissemination Project, 1960-61

As modified and negotiated for a one year's extension the proposal title was changed to read, The Investigation of a Method for the Dissemination of Educational Research Findings to Practitioners and The Study of a Pattern of Organization for the Effective Dissemination of Research Information.

The extension of the title reflected some of the things learned during the first year of the project. The first year's experience also modified some of the basic questions to which, it was hoped, answers could be found. The revised questions and responses are presented in the following text. The responses are distillations of findings and conclusions drawn from evaluations and review by the project staff and executive committee. Questions to be answered:

1. Will the dissemination of information regarding on-going and current research studies to a school study council result in the direct dissemination of such findings to practitioners?

Response: Yes, in direct relationship to the degree to which the study council;

- has the money, staff and facilities to process the material:
(collection, cataloging, abstracting, and synthesizing)
- has access to extensive automated mailing processes and mailing lists for total distribution, individual school contacts, and selected individuals and groups
- can insure training for cooperating schools and their personnel in developing internal dissemination systems
- can obtain support from cooperating schools in providing space, facilities and personnel
- can develop programs and projects which involve practitioners beyond the mere receipt of printed materials.

2. Can a routinized process for the distribution of research materials through an organization such as a study council result in: (a) stimulating practitioners to seek research materials in addition to those provided through the council, in order to obtain more complete information, (b) sharpening critical evaluations by practitioners of their own

operational procedures, (c) testing research findings when applied in the areas of the practitioners' own educational responsibility?

Response: A routinized process for the distribution of research materials through an organization such as a study council can stimulate practitioners to seek research materials in addition to those provided through the council if the materials distributed through the council are accompanied by the kind of related service and local school support which encourages and assists local practitioners in research and experimental activities. The related service includes at least elementary training in research and necessitates critical evaluation and testing by practitioners.

It was interesting to observe that in those schools which most strongly supported the project there was an increase in general activity of an investigative and experimental nature and a subtle but noticeable decrease in dependence on the project office as a sole source of information and help.

3. Will the activities noted above change the opinions of practitioners in regard to certain educational practices or alter their concept of the research process or the value of research?

Response: Administrators and teachers who become actively involved in the project expressed, in interviews, increasingly favorable opinions toward the value of research and innovation information. However, in a questionnaire administered to a group of uninvolved teachers in participating schools and a matched group of teachers in non-participating schools, no significant differences in attitudes toward research were found. Considering these data plus the fact that active involvement in most participating schools had been steadily increasing the staff and executive committee concluded that it is possible to modify practitioner

opinions and/or attitudes toward research but the process requires time and reorganization at the local level.

4. What patterns of distribution of materials or research dissemination activities by a school study council appear to be most effective in influencing practitioners in member schools?

Response: The patterns of distribution and activities which appear to be most effective are those which:

- insure that general information reaches all practitioners but that specifically focused information is directly routed to those with a particular interest in the content.
- provide opportunity for personal contact and cooperation between practitioners and specialist consultants
- make supplementary materials and aids immediately available to practitioners when needed (and in understandable language)
- provide sufficient training and assistance that practitioners can operate with confidence
- encourage and assist local schools in releasing teachers from less important duties for attendance at professional meetings with peers and for assuming increasing responsibility for study and improvement of their own operation.

The twenty percent of participating schools which demonstrated the least innovation during the two year period were those which, for a number of reasons, invested the minimum of their own resources in the project. Nine participating school systems received all materials but requested no follow-up and were represented at meetings in a limited and occasional fashion.

5. Will practitioners in the school systems involved become an important

source for the identification of research needs and can systematic feedback of practitioners' problems be provided in the dissemination process for possible subsequent modification of the process? (Such modification might involve either content and/or method)

Response: Practitioners can become an important source for the identification of research needs and systematic feedback can be secured if the dissemination center and the relationships between it and the schools are properly organized and facilitated.

During the two years of the project several independent research projects were designed and launched in member schools as a result of or drawing upon information disseminated through the project. These included; evaluation of programs for the gifted or able, study of instructional use of natural resources, evaluation of programs for slow learners (mentally retarded), statistical study of grouping and progress, testing developmental reading programs in the secondary schools, analysis of administrative evaluation, experimentation with advanced programs in physical science and biology, testing an experimental program in teaching for creativity, testing an experimental program in elementary science and language arts, and analysis of study habits of junior high school students, among others.

Those schools which generally initiated such activities were those who maintained close working relationships with project staff and kept the staff informed of progress and implications for follow up study. In most cases the provision of specialist consultant help was required at the design and evaluation stages of locally developed and conducted studies.

From these independent activities as well as from the ongoing

cooperative programs a sufficient amount of requests for information and assistance emerged to vastly overtax the resources of CADA.

F. DISSEMINATION

Dissemination is the process of making available to the target audience the information and knowledge that is necessary for the achievement of the project's objectives. It is the process of making available to the target audience the information and knowledge that is necessary for the achievement of the project's objectives. It is the process of making available to the target audience the information and knowledge that is necessary for the achievement of the project's objectives.

If dissemination is to be an effective process, it must be based on a sound understanding of the target audience and the information and knowledge that is necessary for the achievement of the project's objectives. It must be based on a sound understanding of the target audience and the information and knowledge that is necessary for the achievement of the project's objectives. It must be based on a sound understanding of the target audience and the information and knowledge that is necessary for the achievement of the project's objectives.

Dissemination, as a specialized activity, has certain unique characteristics in structure and organization as well as personnel. The peculiar characteristics of a kind of process discipline which performs its function by drawing upon the skills and knowledge of associated content specialists.

Therefore the deployment of staff and facilities and priorities in expenditure for dissemination must be established with consideration of communications knowledge and social change processes and with recognition of professional priorities.

Considering the successes, failures and problems of the two year dissemination project the following recommendations for effective dissemination are presented:

1. There is need for a central directing-coordinating agency for dissemination. Because effective dissemination is a complex process requiring reinforcement in many areas the central agency must assume several functional responsibilities beyond the mere passing on of information.

Such responsibilities would include:

- a. Identifying sources of information on a broad spectrum and arranging to collect information from all appropriate sources. The implication for planning representation from many disciplines and fields of enterprise is clear.
- b. Processing incoming material for dissemination to practitioners. Such processing includes classifying, cataloging, abstracting, synthesizing, and frequently interpreting. The wealth of material and the difficulty of classification, especially in social and behavioral science areas, require development (and probably research) in obtaining better taxonomies. Also, unless the system is extensively automated, information-retrieval will become unwieldy.
- c. Distributing information and material. Aside from direct mailing and publications there is a necessity for reinforcing types of communication with the field which indicates a need for extensive use of television, radio, mass media, professional journals, etc. Again, it would be uneconomical to attempt a dissemination program on a large scale without provision for automating at least the mailing process to highest extent possible.

In addition to the mechanical processes of dissemination the central unit will be required to:

- d. Respond to requests for research information
- e. Provide advisory help on field research efforts
- f. Identify and/or provide specialized consultant assistance
- g. Organize appropriate conferences and seminars
- h. Serve as a demonstration center
- i. Conduct basic research when indicated
- j. Assist individual schools or systems in organizing for internal dissemination and research - and probably train personnel to carry on these functions at the local level.
- k. Develop cooperative working relationship with other agencies and organizations.

To execute these responsibilities adequately will require a large and diversely trained staff representing high degrees of specialization in the various disciplines and in research and research-related areas.

The central agency itself should be so designed that it functions almost like a teaching machine in its demonstrations, training programs, and provision of services.

2. A strong field organization is recommended. Personnel from the central office working in the field will carry the responsibility for: ascertaining that materials are being disseminated to appropriate practitioners, meeting with school boards and other community groups regarding educational development and practice, and providing on-the-spot training and service to school administrators and their staffs.

It seems desirable that field representatives, aside from their content knowledge, also have training in the change process and the role of the social catalyst.

FOOTNOTES

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Appendix A

Project Proposal 1949-1950

Project Title: The Investigation of a Method for the Dissemination of Educational Research Findings to Practitioners

The Problem:

The translation of research findings and reports into comprehensible form for the use of practitioners and the transmission of findings, once translated, to practitioners has been and is a major concern to those interested in the improvement of education. In tracing the dissemination of research findings and generally accepted concepts to school practice the lag has been estimated as up to fifty years.

One vehicle for reducing this lag has been the school study council which, during the past fifteen years, has placed emphasis on the exchange of good practices among school systems and the stimulation of experimentation at the local school level. Attempts to convert study councils into research-producing organizations have not proven successful. Yet the study council might appropriately turn its focus to research if its primary functions were to be the dissemination and application of new knowledge rather than the production of basic research studies.

The Cooperative Research Program of the Office of Education faces the opposite situation. It is in an ideal situation to sponsor basic educational research studies but it must find a method for disseminating the findings of such studies after they are completed. A possible solution for many of the problems of the study council and the Cooperative Research Program might be found in the channeling of new knowledge from the Program to the councils and the dissemination and experimentation with new knowledge by the councils.

The Objectives:

To investigate the effectiveness of the school study council as an agency for the dissemination of educational research findings to practitioners.

Questions to be Answered:

1. Will the dissemination of information regarding on-going and current research studies to a school study council result in the direct dissemination of such findings to practitioners?
2. Will a routinized process for the distribution of research materials to a study council stimulate research activities and/or change practices in the member schools of the council?
3. Will the activities noted above change the opinions of practitioners in regard to certain educational practices or alter their concept of the research process or the value of research?
4. What patterns of distribution of materials or research dissemination activities by a school study council appear to be most effective in influencing practitioners in member schools?

5. Will practitioners in the school systems involved become an important source for the identification of research needs?

Procedures

A single school study council (The Capital Area School Development Association - State University of New York College of Education, Albany, New York) with a membership exceeding forty school systems has been selected for the experimentation. This council will serve as a receiving center for the distribution of the following research data from the Cooperative Research Program:

1. An indexing and categorization system for research in various substantive areas in education.
2. An annotated bibliography of current and completed research in these fields.
3. Summaries of current research projects.
4. Summaries of completed research projects.
5. Syntheses and analyses of research in various areas.
6. Final reports on completed projects when available.

This material will encompass originally all projects being supported under Public Law 551 but will be expanded to cover other projects being supported by the Federal Government, private foundations, and the like. The above-mentioned sources are considered to be the raw material of current research in education. The Council will be responsible for converting this material to usable form for practitioners. In undertaking the conversion the council will investigate such possibilities as newsletters, regional work conferences, annotated bibliographies, field trips by professional staff members, closed circuit T.V., and the like. The intent of the project is not primarily the evaluation of comparative methods of dissemination but rather an evaluation of the college and university with established contacts with neighboring schools as a vehicle for disseminating information to practitioners regardless of the methods employed.

The Office of Education will also provide lists of researchers who are working currently on major research projects and/or who have conducted significant research projects in a particular subject area so that the council may plan for direct contact between researchers and practitioners. The methods here employed will range from intensive contact -- one researcher serving as a consultant to a teachers' work group -- to single contacts -- one or a group of researchers meeting with a group of school personnel for a single meeting.

As material is available and synthesized, the council will be supplied with publications from the Cooperative Research Program to be used in publications to teachers, administrators, and school board members as they see fit.

The council will concentrate during the year not only on developing and using methods of dissemination but on evaluating their effectiveness. This evaluation will include quantitative record keeping, i.e., the number of school

and personal contacts relating to research, the number of council activities growing out of the research material being supplied to the council, and qualitative, i.e., the development of evaluative check lists to determine substantive gains, if any, in various subject areas by the personnel contacted, attitudinal changes as the result of participation in research-connected council activities. In the process of evaluation an attempt will be made to assess the comparative value of varying methods of contact and types of research materials, although the primary purpose will be a general assessment of the effect of having the materials available for dissemination to teachers.

Opportunities will also be provided by the council to practitioners to assist in the further identification of research needs. These opportunities will be given to practitioners who have and who have not participated in research-oriented activities relating to various subject fields.

Personnel

The principal investigator will be Dr. Donald Donley, Executive Director of the Capital Area School Development Association. The co-investigators will be Dr. Robert Lorette, Director of CASDA Funds and Facilities Studies, and Dr. Alfred Cali, Director of CASDA Curriculum Studies, Capital Area School Development Association.

Duration

October 1, 1959 to September 30, 1960.

Appendix B
Project Proposal 1960-1961

Project Title: The Investigation of a Method for the Dissemination of Educational Research Findings to Practitioners and The Study of a Pattern of Organization for the Effective Dissemination of Research Information

The Problem:

The translation of research findings and reports into comprehensible form for the use of practitioners and the transmission of findings, once translated, to practitioners has been and is a major concern to those interested in the improvement of education. In tracing the dissemination of research findings and generally accepted concepts to school practice the lag has been estimated as up to fifty years.

One vehicle for reducing this lag has been the school study council which, during the past fifteen years, has placed emphasis on the exchange of good practices among school systems and the stimulation of experimentation at the local school level. Attempts to convert study councils into research-producing organizations have not proven successful. Yet the study council might appropriately turn its focus to research if its primary functions were to be the dissemination and application of new knowledge rather than the production of basic research studies.

The Cooperative Research Program of the Office of Education faces the opposite situation. It is in an ideal situation to sponsor basic educational research studies but it must find a method for disseminating the findings of such studies after they are completed. A possible solution for many of the problems of the study council and the Cooperative Research Program might be found in the channeling of new knowledge from the Program to the councils and the dissemination and experimentation with new knowledge by the councils.

The Objective:

To investigate the effectiveness of the school study council as an agency for the dissemination of educational research findings to practitioners and to study patterns of organization best suited to the effective dissemination of research information.

Questions to be Answered:

1. Will the dissemination of information regarding on-going and current research studies to a school study council result in the direct dissemination of such findings to practitioners?

2. Can a routinized process for the distribution of research materials through an organization such as a study council result in: (a) stimulating practitioners to seek research materials in addition to those provided through the council, in order to obtain more complete information, (b) sharpening critical evaluations by practitioners of their own operational procedures, (c) testing research findings when applied in the areas of the practitioner's own educational responsibility?

3. Will the activities noted above change the opinions of practitioners in regard to certain educational practices or alter their concept of the research process or the value of research?

4. What patterns of distribution of materials or research dissemination activities by a school study council appear to be most effective in influencing practitioners in member schools?

5. Will practitioners in the school systems involved become an important source for the identification of research needs and can systematic feedback of practitioners' problems be provided in the dissemination process for possible subsequent modification of the process? (Such modification might involve either content and/or method)

Procedures

A single school study council (The Capital Area School Development Association - State University of New York College of Education, Albany, New York) with a membership exceeding forty school systems has been selected for the experimentation. This council will serve as a receiving center for the distribution of the research data from the Cooperative Research Program as listed below:

1. Materials appropriate for the cooperative development of an indexing and categorization system for classifying research in the various substantive areas in education.

2. Summaries of current research projects.

3. Summaries of completed research projects.

4. Monographs on specific research problems.

5. Final reports on completed projects when available.

This material will encompass originally all projects being supported under Public Law 531 but will be expanded to cover other projects being supported by the Federal Government, private foundations, and the like. The above-mentioned sources are considered to be the raw material of current research in education. The Council will be responsible for converting this material into usable form for school practitioners. In undertaking the conversion the council will investigate such possibilities as newsletters, regional work conferences, annotated bibliographies, field trips by professional staff members, closed circuit TV, and the like. The intent of the project as it evolves is primarily to evaluate the effectiveness of the developing patterns of organization for dissemination and the various dissemination procedures which can be used by a college or university having established contacts with practitioners in neighboring schools.

The Office of Education will also provide lists of researchers who are working currently on major research projects and/or who have conducted significant research projects in a particular subject area so that the council may plan for direct contact between researchers and practitioners. The methods here employed will range from intensive contact -- one researcher serving as a consultant to a teachers' work group -- to single contacts -- one or a group of researchers meeting with a group of school personnel for a single meeting.

As material is available and synthesized, the council will be supplied with publications from the Cooperative Research Program to be used in publications to teachers, administrators, and school board members as they see fit.

The council will concentrate during the year not only on developing and using methods of dissemination but on evaluating their effectiveness. This evaluation will include quantitative record keeping, i.e., the number of school and personal contacts relating to research, the number of council activities growing out of the research material being supplied to the council, and qualitative, i.e., the development of evaluative check lists to determine substantive gains, if any, in various subject areas by the personnel contacted, attitudinal changes as the result of participation in research-connected council activities. In the process of evaluation an attempt will be made to assess the comparative value of varying methods of contact and types of research materials, although the primary purpose will be a general assessment of the effect of having the materials available for dissemination to teachers. Dissemination methods will include frequent and continuing direct mailings, the initiation of a research library and center in each participating school, instructions to practitioners for effective utilization of project research materials, informational support for the use of research materials through regional mass media and professional journals, the interpretation and utilization of research data for personnel in participating schools, and an extensive schedule of field visits and lectures by project personnel.

Opportunities will also be provided by the council to practitioners to assist in the further identification of research needs. These opportunities will be given to practitioners who have and who have not participated in research-oriented activities relating to various subject fields. Participating schools and personnel in cooperating schools are receiving and will increasingly receive special individual consultant assistance in the development and conduct of activities designed to adapt dissemination project research data to the solution of local problems where appropriate. Case study reports on each of these developments will be collected for inclusion in project evaluation and description. Local research activities, subsidized by local school systems, but stimulated by the dissemination project materials and procedures will also be observed to aid in the evaluation of dissemination effectiveness.

Personnel

The principal investigator will be Dr. Donald Donley, Executive Director of the Capital Area School Development Association. The co-investigators will be Dr. Alfred Cali, Director of CASDA Curriculum Studies, and Dr. Robert Lorette, Director of CASDA Funds and Facilities Studies, Capital Area School Development Association.

Duration

October 1, 1960 to September 30, 1961

Appendix C

Member Schools - Capital Area School Development Association (1959-1960)

Amsterdam Public Schools
Averill Park Central School
Ballston Spa Public Schools
Berlin Central School
Berne-Knox Central Schools
Bethlehem Central School
Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake Central School
Cairo Central School
Canajoharie Central School
Catskill Public Schools
Chatham High School
Cobleskill Central School
Coxsackie-Athens Central School
Draper High School
Duanesburgh Central School
East Greenbush Central School
Fort Plain Central School
Galway Central School
Greenville Central School
Guilderland Central School
Hoosick Falls Public Schools
Hudson Public Schools
Hunter-Tannersville Central School
Johnstown Public Schools
Mechanicville Central School
Middleburgh Central School
Milne School
Mohonasen Central School
Niskayuna Public Schools
Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk Central School
Richmondville Central School
Roeliff-Jansen Central School
Schalmont Central School
Schenectady Public Schools
Schodack Central School
Schoharie Central School
Schuylerville Central School
Scotia-Glenville Central School
Shenendehowa Central School
South Glens Falls Central School
St. Johnsville Central School
Voorheesville Central School
Waterford Public Schools
Watervliet Public Schools
Windham-Ashland-Jewett Central School

Research Dissemination Project - Consultants

Appendix D

- Stephen Abrahamson - Professor of Education, The University of Buffalo
- Dr. Ridgely Bogg - Assistant Superintendent for Business, Great Neck Public Schools, Great Neck, New York
- Matthijs G. J. Boisserain - Chief Test Engineer, General Dynamics Corporation
- James Brady - Principal Compensation Clerk, New York State Workmens Compensation Board
- Dr. Henry M. Brickell - Special Assistant to the Commissioner of Education for the Study of Educational Innovation in New York State
- William Bristow - Director of Curriculum Research, New York City Public Schools
- Don Brossman - Executive Assistant to the Executive Director of the New York State School Boards Association
- Senator Earl Brydges - New York State Legislature, Chairman of Senate Education Commission 3rd Administrative Seminar 59-60
- Arvid H. Burke - Director of Studies, New York State Teachers Association
- Dr. Henry E. Butler, Jr. - Associate Professor of Educational Administration, University of Rochester
- Dr. Bertis E. Capehart - Associate Director, Education Department, Hill and Knowlton, Inc.
- Steven Carnaro - Field Representative, Social Security Administration
- William R. Carriker - Research Coordinator for the Cooperative Research Branch of the United States Office of Education
- Dr. Richard Carter - Director, Study of School Community Communications, Institute for Communication Research, Stanford University
- Leo Casey - Business Manager, Garden City Schools, Garden City, Long Island
- Dr. David Clark - Acting Director, Cooperative Research Program, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare
- Evan R. Collins - President, State University College of Education, Albany, N.Y.
- Philip Coombs - Secretary, Fund for the Advancement of Education
- John Cornman - Professor of Agriculture, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York

Edmund H. Crane - President New York State Educational Research Association
and Director Division of Research, New York State Education
Department

Roger Crane - Teaching Team Associate, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

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Nicholas De Witt - Russian Research Center, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

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Raymond Engel Jr. - Johnson Service Company, Albany, New York

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J. A. Halbritter - University of the State of New York, State Education
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Roy M. Hall - Assistant Commissioner for Research, United States Office of
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Milton Latta - Sales Manager, Fuel Efficiency, Inc, Palmyra, New York

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Charles McAllister - Director of Educational Services of the New York State Department of Mental Hygiene

Dr. Harold Mitzel - Director of Educational Research Teacher Education Division, City University of New York

Dr. James Moore - Principal, Landing School, Glen Cove, New York

Philip Moore - Associate in School Business Management, State Education Department

Raymond Morse - Sales Manager, J. A. Sexauer Co., Albany, New York

Ewald B. Nyquist - Deputy Commissioner of Education, New York State Education Department

Dr. William O'Dell - Chairman, Department of School Administration, Stanford University, Stanford, California

Maurice Osborne - Director of Division of School Business Management, New York State Education Department

Ellen Porter - Executive Associate New York State Citizens Committee for Public Schools Inc.

Charles Quinn - University of the State of New York, State Education Department

Wade Robinson - Assistant to the Director of School and University Program
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B. Lloyd Rogers - Insurance Consultant, Albany Associates Incorporated

Dr. John Rosenbach - University of Buffalo, Educational Research Center,
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George Ryder - founder of the Central School Board's Committee for Educational
Research.

Dr. Alice Scates - Research Director, U.S. Office of Education, Cooperative
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Bernard Shawn - Teacher of the Mentally Retarded, Albany Public Schools,
Albany, New York

Edith C. Simmons - President of the Board of Education, Great Neck, Long Island

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bush Central School, East Greenbush, New York

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